

# ***Pensioners' Newsletter - August 2012***

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## **News from the South**

Hi Everyone:

Well, what a wonderful summer we are all enjoying this year. Not only has it been wet but also very cold. I can't remember having the heating on in July before!!! I think we all need a summer fuel allowance. Roll on the better weather to come around November/December (just in time for our Christmas Dinner and Dance)!! In spite of the weather, your Committee is continuing to work hard running the trips planned for this year. The meeting up of old friends and making new ones on these social events was the main reason that the VPA was formed and continues to remain our primary function, so if you want a good day out at an affordable price, why not try one out. I know you will not be disappointed.

Last year we had a request from a number of VPA members for a trip out to Southend and as a result this was included in this year's programme and proved to be very popular. We are always looking for new places to go, so if you have any ideas please let us know by calling the VPA office.

Well I'm going off for a game of golf now. Let me see I've got my wellingtons, umbrella, snorkel and rubber ring, so I should be O.K. Hope to see you at some time in the near future.

*John Boast*

## **News from the North**

Dear All:

Since the last Newsletter we have had a very busy time at the Club. Although I was unable to go to see Sister Act, those who did tell me it was superb and enjoyed by all.

Our June social evening comprised of a Jubilee dinner followed by some good entertainment, the evening was well attended with lots of people getting into the spirit of things by wearing red, white and blue. The trip to the Crich Tramway Museum was a super day. It was very interesting and we were able to see many renovated trams and were able to take rides on some of them. Some members were even brave enough to admit to remember travelling on trams!! It was followed by a visit to Bakewell and as the sun shone all day we really felt summer had arrived. Unfortunately it didn't stay long as the July trip was accompanied by heavy rain all day. We had a lovely two and a half hour nostalgic trip on the Welsh Mountain Railway. I think the scenery was superb, but the mist and rain somewhat spoil that, but hey you can't have everything!

This month I must end on a sad note. Sadly Joyce Royle (Ken's wife) passed away very suddenly recently. It was heartwarming to see so many ex Vauxhall colleagues supporting Ken and his family at the funeral. I know you would want me to send your condolences to Ken.

Enjoy the rest of the summer and stay safe whatever you do.

*Dave Williams*

## **Introducing Your Committee**

We turn the spotlight onto Brian Champkins in this issue. Brian started at Vauxhall in 1962 and for his first year worked as an office boy for various Production Managers. In 1963 he started a 5 year Engineering apprenticeship with a day a week at college, finishing with a City & Guilds Diploma. For the next year Brian was assigned to the Tool Room working on jigs and fixtures before moving on to the inspection of tools and gauges. Recognising the experience and skills he had obtained he was transferred to Supplier Quality Assurance dealing with all manner of suppliers both at the Vauxhall site and in their own premises. Among the countries he visited on behalf of Vauxhall were Italy, Turkey, France, Portugal, Scotland and Wales. No doubt this prompted his interest in overseas travel following his retirement in March 2002.

Brian joined both the Visiting and Vauxhall Pensioners Committees in 2007 and has been active in both organisations. For the Visiting Committee he not only has helped members with individual cases, but is always to be found helping make up and then delivering hampers at Christmas (although he does stop short of dressing up as Father Christmas!). During this period he liaised with the Vauxhall Motors Recreation Club in organising longer trips all over Europe.

In fact, he is organising a trip to Scotland in 2013 which is highlighted later in this Newsletter.

Brian can best be described as an all round good guy and thoroughly deserved the Mayor of Luton award for outstanding service to the community and to guiding which he received in 2009.

## **Ashley Daly**

Our graduate contact within Vauxhall has, for the last year, been Rachael Hayman. These graduates are at Vauxhall for only one year before returning to their studies. Rachel has been replaced by Ashley Daly and it is he who

will send out the prompting e-mails regarding the Newsletter being on the website in future.

### **Pat On The Back Time**

You may recall that we gave information on how to obtain water rebates in our April Newsletter. Pleasingly we have heard from two of our members who did as we suggested and found themselves in receipt of a healthy rebate. So thanks to Trevor Marsh and Alan Rowley for taking the time to let us know how they got on. Remember if surface water on your property runs into a soakaway and **not** back into the water company drainage system you could be entitled to your own annual rebate.

If anyone else is successful please let us know.

### **Vauxhall Memories**

Tony Lines, ex-Personnel Department, tells the tale of a particularly tense and arduous meeting between the Company and the Trade Unions in the 1970's. The purpose of their meeting was to discuss inter union relativities. As such the Union side of the table had representatives from the Electrician's Union, the T & G and the AUEW. During the meeting a representative from the Electrician's collapsed to the floor (thankfully not hurt). Quick as a flash a member of one of the other Unions was heard to utter "typical electrician always first out!".

Does anyone remember the Apprentice School based at the top of Airport Hill? Well Mike Roberts, our ex-Chairman does and he recalls some of the leg pulls that went on in a time when the Company recruited hundreds of apprentices each summer. As well as the usual sending of a young lad to the stores for a tin of elbow grease, a left-handed screwdriver or a long weight (wait) there was one particular jape which was a little more cruel. New apprentices were given a white tea cup when admitted to the apprentice school and told this was their property and if lost would be replaced at their cost. In those days the Main Canteen supplied tea and coffee at tea breaks in huge urns. The darker, murkier and generally oily looking the better. This wheeze involved purloining the new recruit's cup, drilling a hole in the bottom and packing this hole with white chalk. The unfortunate, thirsty owner of the cup queued up and paid for their drink and within a few moments watched the beverage exit the bottom of the cup. Reputations were enhanced if the hot liquid hit the overalls or trousers in the nether regions!

Finally this month how many of you remember Noel Loney? He was the chap who stood in Kimpton Road, by the Showrooms, whatever

the weather preaching the good word. For many years he was part of the Vauxhall scene and it is not known how many he converted, but what was telling was that nobody gave him any abuse either.

Please send in any memories you have as this column only gets written if you supply the data.

### **Book Appeal**

Cherie Denton, Vauxhall Welfare and VPA Committee Member, is spending one day a week helping children with learning difficulties learn to read. If you have any children's books (I am thinking grandchildren here) that are no longer needed, please contact Cherie, details at the end of the Newsletter, or the VPA office as to how to get them from you to Cherie.

### **The Haircut - Brilliant**

One day a florist went to a barber for a haircut. After the cut he asked about his bill and the barber replied "I cannot accept money from you. I'm doing community service this week". The florist was pleased and left the shop. When the barber went to open his shop the next morning there was a 'thank you' card and a dozen roses waiting for him at his door. Later a cop comes in for a haircut and when he tries to pay his bill, the barber again replied "I cannot accept money from you. I'm doing community service this week". The cop was happy and left the shop. The next morning when the barber went to open up there was a 'thank you' card and a dozen doughnuts waiting for him at his door. Then an MP came in for a haircut and when he went to pay his bill the barber again replied "I cannot accept money from you. I'm doing community service this week". The MP was very happy and left the shop. The next morning when the barber went to open up there were a dozen MPs lined up waiting for a free hair cut.

And that my friends illustrates the fundamental difference between the citizens of our country and the politicians who run it.

**BOTH POLITICIANS AND NAPPIES  
NEED TO BE CHANGED OFTEN AND  
FOR THE SAME REASON!**

### **Vauxhall 25 Year Club Annual Dinner and Cabaret.**

The 2012 event will take place at the Riverside Suite, Gypsy Lane on Friday, 26th October 2012. Tickets are £25 p.p. and lounge suits is the dress code. For tickets please contact Cherie Denton on 01582 427204.

## **Your Chance To Win £10 M & S Voucher**

The answers to the cryptic clues listed below are all UK towns or cities. As usual the answer to the first question is given.

- 1 Tub full of water (Bath)
  - 2 Has a letter to spare
  - 3 Sister was cannibalised
  - 4 Ships men
  - 5 Ostrich stuck in a rabbit hole
  - 6 Dirty water
  - 7 Latest fort
  - 8 Male meadow
  - 9 RAF ace
  - 10 A chocolate bar without for instance
  - 11 Tend the fire
  - 12 Charcoal
  - 13 Captured aristocrat
  - 14 Glass Mansion
  - 15 Professor of roller
  - 16 Famous for pensioners
  - 17 Someone leaving
  - 18 Where seated life begins
  - 19 Prime number of trees
  - 20 Object of Stanleys attention
- Competition closes on Friday, 21<sup>st</sup> September. Send entries to either the office or [normanmcgregor3@gmail.com](mailto:normanmcgregor3@gmail.com). Please put your details on your entry. Good luck.

## **Bournemouth, Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> June**

Three coachloads of VPArites packed their buckets and spades and headed to the coast for the annual pilgrimage to the sun god Sol. Surprisingly, for this year so far there was not much evidence of the golden rays, although it was mostly dry. However, the wind was harsh and strong and found bodily places that had long been forgotten. Nevertheless thanks to Harry Ramsden, the usual retail outlets, a variety of coffee shops and good company a great time was had by all.

## **Wembley – Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> July**

A smaller than expected group took this trip although one advantage to those who went was they enjoyed a much more personal and audible guide. Following the Stadium Tour the group ate a carvery lunch at Borehamwood before arriving back in Luton at around 3.30 p.m.

## **Early Warning For 2013**

We have managed to reserve a number of places for a 7day/6night holiday to Scotland departing Sunday, 21st July 2013. The trip is entitled "Great Days of Steam" and promises, at £375 per person, to be great value. More information can be obtained from the office. We are flagging this trip up very early because it is expected to be a popular event so all that

can be said is "book early to avoid disappointment". A deposit of £30 per person is required by end of September 2012.

## **Upcoming Events in the South**

### **RHS Wisley Flower Show – Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> September**

Enjoy the Wisley Flower Show 2012. With around 40 exhibitors and a stunning display by the Surrey NAFAS the show is a must for all interested in plants.

Whilst in the garden take in the late summer borders and the inspirational Surrey Sculpture Society Trail with around 60 exhibits from both up and coming and more established artists. Cost is £20 p.p. for non RHS members and £10 for p.p. for RHS members.

### **Bletchley Park, Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> October**

Visit to Bletchley Park includes guided tour. Should be of particular interest to engineers and those of you who enjoy crosswords and sudoku. On the homeward journey you will stop off at Dobbies Garden Centre, Old Bletchley. All of this for just £19.50 per person.

## **Our Christmas Party**

As of now we have had a lukewarm response to our Christmas Party (or Dinner and Dance). For only £20 per person you get a three course meal, very popular dance group and a seasonal recital by the Vauxhall Male Voice Choir, plus the chance to meet up with old friends and colleagues in a friendly and festive atmosphere. We do not want to cancel this event - it has been held for many years - so please ring the office and book your ticket before the politicians decide to tax happiness (poor Ken Dodd!!).

## **Golf Dates**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October** - South Beds Golf Club - 4 Ball event

## **Quiz Nights**

Quiz Nights will be held on 16<sup>th</sup> October and 4<sup>th</sup> December. Note that the dates are Tuesdays and the event begins at 7.00 p.m. in the Acorn Room at the Recreation Club.

## **Tea Dance Schedule**

Held in the Riverside Suite and starting at 2.00 p.m. the dates for 2012 are:

Aug 8 <sup>th</sup> , 29 <sup>th</sup>	
Sept 12 <sup>th</sup> , 26 <sup>th</sup>	Oct 10 <sup>th</sup> , 24 <sup>th</sup>
Nov 7 <sup>th</sup> , 14 <sup>th</sup>	Dec 5 <sup>th</sup>

## Upcoming Events in the North

### Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> August

Trip to Ludlow, calling at the Judges Lodgings in Powys

### Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> September

Trip to York

### Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> October

Trip to Blackpool

### Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> November

Pre-Christmas Lunch, Ellesmere Port College  
£10 per person

### Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> November

Good Food Show

Full details of times and cost can be obtained from the club on social evenings

## Tea Dances:

On reading the last Newsletter it seems I owe the Tea Dance people an apology. It should have read that there were no Tea Dances in July and August, not September as stated. The September Tea Dances are Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 25<sup>th</sup>.

## Pensioners Lottery Results – Luton

### Drawn 11<sup>th</sup> July 2012

D.C.R. Mardle	P1011137	£417.59
M.W. Bee	P2006419	£104.40
D.J. Mills	P2005883	£104.40
H.J. Aird	P1006196	£ 52.20
D. Spring	P2007149	£ 52.20
P.K. Cain	P2003380	£ 52.20
M. Ahamed	P1017993	£ 52.20
P.G. James	P2003491	£ 26.10
P.E. Stern	P2002345	£ 26.10
W.G. Knight	P1000659	£ 26.10
I.W. Beel	P082147C	£ 26.10
K.A.M. Dickson	P017236F	£ 26.10
B.D. Groucott	P1011783	£ 26.10
B.E. Young	P2020118C	£ 26.10
L.M. Stephenson	P1006644	£ 26.10

## Pensioners Lottery Results – Ellesmere Port

### Drawn 26<sup>th</sup> June 2012

G.W. Ellison	P1010594	£320.00
A. Jones	P1009410	£320.00
R.E. Millard	P1000180	£126.00
R. Walker	P1007006	£126.00
J. Williams	P1009392	£126.00

## In Memoriam – Luton

**Brooks**, Thomas Henry, Division 009

Died 5.2.12, Aged 85, Retired 1981

**Brooks**, Brian Percy, Division 330

Died 24.5.12, Aged 70, Retired 2002

**Chapman**, Norman, Division 436

Died 18.6.12, Aged 91, Retired 1982

**Gordon**, Patricia, Division 527

Died 14.6.12, Aged 79, Retired 1982

**Impey**, Percy William (Bob), Division 845

Died 21.6.12, Aged 89, Retired 1981

**King**, John Charles, Division 029

Died 31.5.12, Aged 92, Retired 1982

**Males**, Derek George, Division 082

Died 18.5.12, Aged 76, Retired 1993

**McKenna**, Francis, Division 042

Died 8.5.12, Aged 94, Retired 1981

**Medhurst**, Herbert Cecil, VM Staff

Died 25.5.12, Aged 92, Retired 1981

**Newstead**, Dennis Alfred, Division 824

Died 22.6.12, Aged 81, Retired 1987

**O'Neill**, Penelope Susan, Division 522

Died 1.7.12, Aged 66, Retired 2000

**Phelps**, Leslie Randall, Division 053

Died 16.5.12, Aged 84, Retired 1984

**Piggott**, Frank Oliver, BCV Staff

Died 30.4.12, Aged 82, Retired 1986

**Prychidnyj**, Mychailo (Michael) Division 454

Died 1.7.12, Aged 90, Retired 1984

**Williams**, Thomas Ray (Ray), VM Staff

Died 25.5.12, Aged 87, Retired 1982

**Woods**, Derek Sidney, Division 527

Died 31.5.12, Aged 74, Retired 1994

**Wrigglesworth**, Douglas Herbert, VM Staff

Died 31.5.12, Aged 86, Retired 1982

## In Memoriam – Ellesmere Port

**Humphreys**, Norman William, Division 663

Died 13.7.12, Aged 81, Retired 1987

## How To Access the Newsletter and 2012 AGM Minutes (New Introduction) on the Internet

[www.thepensiondepartment.co.uk/vpp/pensioner\\_pages](http://www.thepensiondepartment.co.uk/vpp/pensioner_pages)

## Register For E-Mail Prompts

If you wish to receive an e-mail prompt when the Newsletter is available on line, please send your e-mail address to:

[ashley.daly@vauxhall.co.uk](mailto:ashley.daly@vauxhall.co.uk)

## Useful Telephone and Contact Information VPA South

VPA Office 01582 427921

Office is manned Monday, Tuesday and Friday between 10.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m.

E-mail [vpa@gm.com](mailto:vpa@gm.com)

Vauxhall Pensions Department 01582 721122

E-mail [marion.mcdonald@vauxhall.co.uk](mailto:marion.mcdonald@vauxhall.co.uk)

Cherie Denton, Vauxhall Welfare Officer  
01582 427204

E-mail [cherie.denton@vauxhall.co.uk](mailto:cherie.denton@vauxhall.co.uk)

## VPA North

Anne Atherall 01244 325891

If you have a story you would like to tell, then please get in touch with Norman McGregor via the VPA office or

e-mail [normanmcgregor3@gmail.com](mailto:normanmcgregor3@gmail.com)

The views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Company.